

August 7, 2026

VET TECH FRIDAYS

Knowledge, News, and Updates



Staff Spotlight

Beth Golden, RVT

For the past few years, Mrs. Golden has been a familiar and essential presence at VTI, where her passion for teaching and animal care shines through every day.

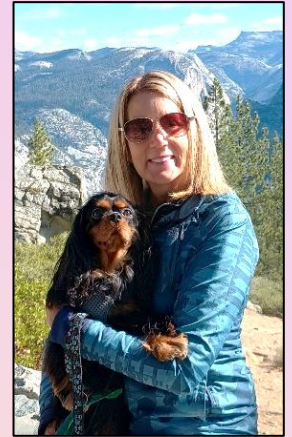
Beth has a gift for helping students find their confidence, especially during hands-on skills labs. "I can be tough on them sometimes," she admits with a smile, "but it's only because I see what they're capable of. Watching that 'lightbulb moment,' whether it's a student successfully palpating a bladder or drawing blood for the first time, is the real reward."

With 36 years as a Registered Veterinary Technician, Mrs. Golden brings a wealth of experience to VTI. She spent 15 years at the Purdue University Veterinary Teaching Hospital, rotating through Community Practice/Exotics, Internal Medicine, Cardiology, ICU, and Dentistry. As the Treatment Room Technician, she oversaw the hospital's blood donor program with in-house Greyhounds and cats, and working with student and staff-owned animals.

Mrs. Golden's commitment to animals doesn't stop at the clinic. She volunteered during Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Harvey, providing ICU support, organizing donations, and reuniting families with their pets. One of her most memorable moments involved performing CPR on a duck and fostering a Miniature Pinscher she nicknamed "Parker the Barker" until her family was found.

When she's not on campus, Mrs. Golden enjoys spending time with her son and husband, travelling, paddleboarding, baking, attending live music events, and volunteering with her therapy dog, Mocha, and her other dog, Bellini (aka Beans).

Mrs. Golden's dedication to animals and students alike makes her a vital part of the VTI family. Whether she's teaching a new skill or ensuring the animals are well cared for, her heart is always in the right place, and that makes all the difference.



Student of the Week

Caitlin Yarusso



This week, we're excited to recognize Caitlin Yarusso as our Student of the Week!

Caitlin was nominated by multiple instructors who all shared the same sentiment: she is an absolute joy to have in the program. She comes to class prepared, asks thoughtful questions, communicates exceptionally well, and approaches every day with genuine enthusiasm for learning.

One of the things that stands out most about Caitlin is her attitude. Rather than treating school like a burden, she embraces every opportunity to learn and grow. Her excitement for veterinary medicine is evident in everything she does, and that positive outlook is refreshing to everyone around her.

Caitlin is also known for consistently stepping up to help wherever she is needed. Whether she's assisting with intake exams, volunteering to help Mrs. Howell run fecal exams, or lending a hand with extra tasks in the kennel, she's always willing to contribute without being asked. One instructor shared, *"I don't see anyone else volunteering to help Mrs. Howell run fecal exams, for example."* Another simply added, *"She has helped me a ton with intake fecals!"*

In addition to her willingness to help, Caitlin is consistently on time, courteous, kind, and dependable. She has quickly earned the respect of both her instructors and classmates through her strong work ethic and eagerness to learn.

Congratulations, Caitlin! Thank you for your positive attitude, dedication, and the kindness you bring to our campus each day. We can't wait to see all that you'll accomplish in the veterinary field!

Externship Spotlight

Lucy Jones
03DV25



Throughout her time at Vet Tech Institute of Indiana, Lucy Jones has been a student who consistently goes above and beyond. A 4.0 student, Lucy has served as both a peer tutor and a Federal Work-Study employee, helping fellow students in the tutoring center while also gaining valuable hands-on experience at Indianapolis Animal Care Services (IACS). Along the way, she was recognized as Student of the Week after being nominated by three different instructors for her exceptional work ethic, positive attitude, and willingness to help wherever she was needed.

Her instructors praised her for always jumping in to assist during hands-on labs, helping with kennel duties and intake exams, and regularly asking if there was anything else she could do. One instructor simply summed her up by saying, *"Love her and her sweet attitude."*

Now, Lucy is carrying that same enthusiasm into externship.

Externship has been an incredible experience for Lucy Jones, and she's soaking up every opportunity to learn.

"Externship has been going amazing so far. I've seen so many things, and I'm absolutely loving it."

One of the most rewarding moments she's experienced was watching a dog regain the ability to walk after losing motor function.

"The coolest thing so far was seeing a dog who had no motor function finally start using her legs on her own again!"

Lucy has also had the unique opportunity to follow a patient through every stage of recovery from a TPLO (Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy) procedure.

"I've learned how the rehabilitation process works because I've seen the surgical aspect of a TPLO, the inpatient recovery, and now the rehabilitation side. It's been really neat to see all aspects of recovery come together."

When asked about her most memorable patient, one special Golden Retriever immediately came to mind.

Gemma, a sweet Golden Retriever battling gastrointestinal lymphoma, has left a lasting impression on Lucy. Gemma's mom is a veterinarian, and both of her owners work in the veterinary field. Despite everything she's going through, Gemma arrives at each oncology appointment with her favorite Harry Potter blanket and a loaf of bread to snack on. In fact, the medical oncology team recently surprised her with a "Bring Your Own Bread" party!

While Gemma has not yet responded to chemotherapy treatments, her sweet spirit continues to brighten everyone's day.

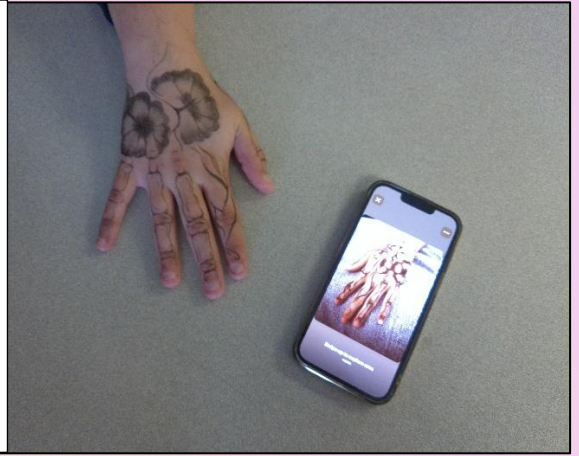
"She is the absolute sweetest dog ever and is still the sweetest girl through her whole journey."

Lucy has already made an incredible impact at VTI through her leadership, kindness, and dedication to helping others. It's exciting to see her continue to grow during externship, and we can't wait to see where her passion for veterinary medicine takes her next.

Photos Around Campus



A creative moment between classes for these 03DV26 students. Wade Short puts her artistic skills on display with a detailed hand design for Desiree Freeman.



Roommates, classmates, and zoo adventures! 11DV25 students Macyn Patton, Adrianna Shadday, Alyssa Sutton, Allison Kunze, and 03DV26 student Addison Veith take a break to capture the moment during their visit to the Australia exhibit.

03DV26 student Audrey Tafoya proudly shows off a successful venipuncture after demonstrating one of the many hands-on skills future veterinary technicians master.



Focused, engaged, and always learning. Our 11DV25 students follow along and take notes during Mrs. Dixon's Animal Technology V lecture on primate species and ferrets.



One of the perks of living on campus? A quick walk to class with friends! 07DV26 students Kira Ropes, Serenity Rounsaville, Grace Mowery, and Hailey Rockenbaugh head to class together.



Photos Around Campus

Learning one microbe at a time! 11DV25 student Riley Packard pays close attention during Mrs. Stout's Microbiology lecture.



Say cheese! 11DV25 students Lexi Clift and Mara Porter were all smiles after turning around during lecture to discover a camera waiting for them. We love those genuine smiles, ladies!



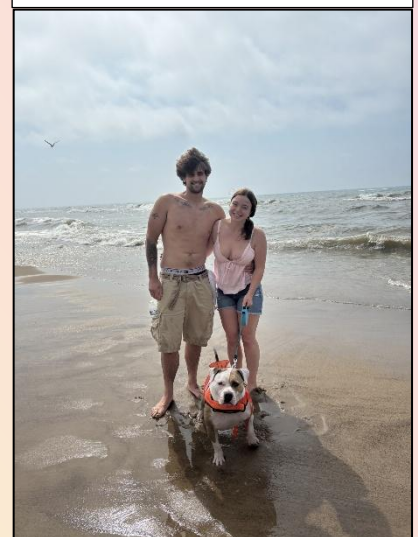
Tiny but mighty! Mrs. Stout teaches Microbiology, where 11DV25 students are learning about the microscopic organisms that play a huge role in animal health.

Fun fact: There are more bacterial cells living in and on your body than there are people on Earth!

Our 07DV25 students spent time in the horse barn building essential equine handling and assessment skills! They practiced equine physical exams, haltering and leading, hoof picking, using hoof testers, and taking accurate weight and height measurements. Every hands-on experience brings them one step closer to becoming confident veterinary technicians.



Happy 2-year anniversary to 11DV25 student Sophia Stevens and her boyfriend! They spent the weekend celebrating at an Indians Game and the Michigan sand dunes with their dog, Bentley.



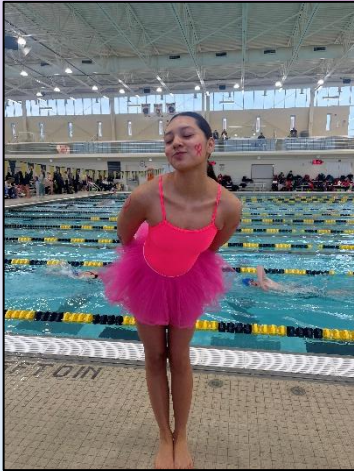
Student Voices

Genesis Rodriguez Jover
07DV26

It's currently week five of VTI's first-term classes. My biggest goal was to start the year off strong. For many, that would mean acing all the tests because that's how it was in high school: take a test and ace it without studying. I tried that and failed. This happened to me and many in my cohort after our first quizzes in several of our classes.



My biggest fear was staying in a state of panic over my grades because in high school, I didn't have to do much to have good grades. I learned quickly this is not at all like high school, and everything that was told to me again and again was, in fact, not just supposed to be background noise.



Veterinary medicine is a gateway to what I truly believe in: helping others. I knew I had a choice to stay and dwell on my bad grades or change my approach. I took the advice of my very dear high school swim coach, who told me, "Do what you can with all of the information you have."

I began to retain as much information as I could before each class so there would be no chance for me to feel left out of the topic. By doing so, my grades began to reflect my time, dedication, and passion for this profession.

**I could not be more excited for the challenges to come because
I've learned to be comfortable being uncomfortable,
and this has enabled true change.**



Underrated Animals

Turkey Vulture: Nature's Cleanup Crew

Turkey vultures aren't usually the first animal that comes to mind when people think of wildlife worth celebrating. In fact, many people overlook them entirely or assume they're simply "ugly scavengers." But these remarkable birds play one of the most important roles in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Without turkey vultures, our environment would be far dirtier, smellier, and much more susceptible to the spread of disease.



Unlike hawks and eagles, turkey vultures rarely kill live prey. Instead, they specialize in eating carrion; the remains of animals that have already died. While that may not sound glamorous, it's an incredibly important job. By quickly removing carcasses from roadsides, fields, forests, and other natural areas, turkey vultures help prevent the spread of harmful bacteria and disease while recycling nutrients back into the environment. In many ways, they're nature's sanitation department.

One of the turkey vultures' most impressive abilities is its sense of smell. Most birds have a very poor sense of smell, but turkey vultures are among the few exceptions. They can detect the scent of decaying animals from over a mile away, even if the carcass is hidden beneath dense forest canopies. This extraordinary ability allows them to locate food that many other scavengers would never find.



Turkey vultures are also built to safely eat food that would make most animals extremely sick. Their stomach acid is incredibly powerful; strong enough to destroy dangerous bacteria like anthrax, botulism, and salmonella that may be present in decaying animals. As a result, they help stop these harmful pathogens from lingering in the environment and spreading to other wildlife, livestock, pets, or even people.

If you've ever seen a group of large birds soaring high overhead without flapping their wings, there's a good chance you've been watching turkey vultures. They are masters of soaring flight, using rising columns of warm air called thermals to stay aloft for hours while expending very little energy. It's an incredibly efficient way to search vast areas for food.

Despite their impressive wingspan, turkey vultures have surprisingly weak feet and talons compared to hawks and eagles. Since they don't need to capture struggling prey, they evolved lightweight feet that are better suited for walking than grabbing. Instead of relying on strength, they rely on their keen senses and exceptional flying abilities to survive.

Another unusual adaptation is how turkey vultures cool themselves on hot days. Rather than sweating like humans, they sometimes urinate or defecate on their own legs. As the moisture evaporates, it cools their body in much the same way sweat cools us. While it may seem strange, it's a highly effective natural cooling system. Scientists also believe the acidic waste may help disinfect their legs after walking through carcasses.

Although they can appear intimidating because of their large size and featherless red heads, turkey vultures are generally peaceful birds that avoid conflict whenever possible. Their bald heads are actually another clever adaptation, preventing bacteria and decaying material from sticking to feathers while feeding inside carcasses and making it much easier to stay clean.

The next time you see turkey vultures circling high overhead, remember that they aren't waiting for something to die. Often, they're simply riding warm air currents while searching for food with remarkable efficiency. These often-misunderstood birds quietly perform one of nature's most important jobs every single day, helping keep our landscapes cleaner, healthier, and safer for wildlife, domestic animals, and people alike. Sometimes the least appreciated animals turn out to be the ones doing the most important work.



TL;DR: Turkey vultures are nature's cleanup crew. They feed almost exclusively on animals that have already died, helping prevent the spread of disease and keeping ecosystems healthy.

With an incredible sense of smell, powerful stomach acid that destroys harmful bacteria, and energy-efficient soaring flight, these often-misunderstood birds play a vital role in protecting wildlife, livestock, pets, and people.

CALLING VET STUDENTS, ASSISTANTS, AND TECHS!

VET TECH TRIVIA?

AUG 13, 2026 | 8:00 PM EST



SCAN TO REGISTER

Join us for a fun-filled virtual trivia night! Test your knowledge, unwind with peers, and compete for a shot at the \$500 top prize, everyone is welcome.

3rd Prize	2nd Prize	1st Prize
\$150	\$300	\$500

Plus, two (2) randomly chosen participants will be awarded a \$25 gift card!

Mission 
PET HEALTH